

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A return device for containers, such as bottles, cups, cans, or the like, comprising: an insertion opening for receiving the container and at least one distributing means for transporting the container from said insertion opening to a selectable processing means of said return device, said distributing means comprising at least one intermediate bottom and a receiving means both rotatably supported about a shaft which is movable relative to said bottom and transports said container away from said insertion opening, wherein said receiving means is rotated to transport the container away from said insertion ~~comprises a bottom opening relative to which a sorting opening and~~ of said intermediate bottom is rotated to position a sorting opening of the intermediate bottom relative to a bottom opening of said receiving means for passing said container through the sorting opening and the bottom opening can be positioned for passing said container therethrough to a the selected processing means.

2. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said return device has arranged therein a support plate which comprises a number of passage holes, each assigned to passage hole communicating with at least one processing means, and relative to which said intermediate bottom is movable for arranging said sorting opening between the bottom opening and a selected passage hole.

3. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said receiving means comprises a shell ~~which can be assigned with its~~ including an open side ~~to~~ which can be moved to provide said insertion opening.

4. (Previously Presented) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said intermediate bottom is circular and rotatable about its center axis.

5. (Previously Presented) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said sorting opening is designed as a radially outwardly open peripheral recess.

6. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ said including a shell which is rotatably supported in coaxial fashion relative to said center axis.

7. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, wherein a bearing shaft extends substantially in a vertical direction from said support plate and has rotatably supported thereon a shell and/or said intermediate bottom.

8. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim ~~4~~ 7, wherein said bearing shaft is a hollow shaft.

9. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said passage holes are arranged along a circle in concentric fashion relative to said intermediate bottom.

10. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, comprising passage holes, wherein a guide extends from each passage hole to a corresponding processing means.

11. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, ~~wherein~~ including at least one identifying means ~~is assigned~~ arranged with respect to at least one of said insertion opening, ~~and/or~~ said receiving means, ~~and/or~~ said support plate, ~~and/or~~ and said intermediate bottom for identifying at least one characteristic feature of said container.

12. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 4 11, wherein the characteristic feature of said container is the geometrical shape thereof.

13. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 4 11, wherein a storage and/or evaluation means is ~~assigned~~ connected to said identifying means, ~~in particular~~ for storing different geometrical shapes of said container and for comparing a container to be recognized with a stored shape.

14. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 4 11, wherein said identifying means is designed as a scanning means and is movable relative to ~~the~~ a container to be scanned.

15. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said intermediate bottom comprises a rotational sleeve which is rotatably attached to the a bearing shaft of said support plate.

16. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said a shell is connected to a bearing sleeve ~~held by means of a radial arm by a bearing sleeve~~ which is rotatably attached to said a rotational sleeve.

17. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said a rotational sleeve of said intermediate bottom is rotatably supported in the a hollow shaft of said support plate and a bearing shaft of said receiving means is rotatably supported in said rotational sleeve.

18. (Currently Amended) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said a shell of said receiving means and said intermediate bottom are rotatable according to signals of said identifying means for identifying at least one characteristic feature of said container.

19. (Previously Presented) The return device according to claim 1, wherein said intermediate bottom is sector-like.